Chapter XII

Cases and Interviews

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Introduction

As I examined hundreds of Web sites promising electronic or Web portfolio data for this text, and performed observations and interviews with dozens of students and colleagues, I discovered some exemplary cases of Web portfolio usage. The Web portfolio phenomena and the rise in electronic portfolio development within all disciplines have prompted academic institutions to develop Web portfolio programs and to push these programs towards faculty and students. My general observations are that the institutions that make serious efforts to develop and manage a sound electronic portfolio program are getting good results. Right now, it is not conceivable for an institution to be able to have 100 percent of their student and faculty populations to have Web portfolios. At Penn State University, in the Dutton E-Education Institute, they are trying by providing 500 MB of Web portfolio space to all undergraduate students while enrolled. The institute recently reported in December 2004 that
one in three undergraduate students activate their Web portfolio and use it for academic reflection and professional purposes. The Dutton Institute and Penn State’s e-portfolio initiative are highlighted further in this chapter.

During interviews with students and faculty members who have created Web portfolios, I discovered some interesting themes that included fear of copyright infringement, technical worries, and lack of process knowledge. These themes encompass problems and positive events that shaped each Web portfolio author's experiences and these are also discussed later in the chapter.

Also in this chapter, a Web-based e-portfolio program proposal sample is included to give you a head start on creating a proposal for your institution or program. The sample is based on criteria for new technology proposals distributed by an academic vice president at a four-year university. It is not meant to be a one-size-fits-all proposal. It is meant to give structure to developing an initial program concept. Proposal adaptation based on discipline, industry, and curriculum would certainly be needed.

Finally, electronic portfolios are widely seen in the discipline of education. This chapter provides observations of teacher Web portfolios which include all levels of educators from elementary through higher education. These cases seem to have exemplary qualities that fit the teacher Web portfolio and can be transcended into the creation of Web portfolios in any discipline. The goal of examining these cases is to identify important components in the Web portfolios of teachers that represent evidence of professional development, project and skill sets, and persuasion. These teacher Web portfolio cases are effective models for use in any discipline.

### Web Portfolio Program Case

Penn State University provides an interesting case on Web portfolios. David DiBiase leads the E-education Institute in the College of Earth and Mineral Sciences. Professor DiBiase has initiated a policy for all of his students in the Earth and Mineral Sciences Program (EMS) to create a Web portfolio of assignments in his geographic information sciences undergraduate course. DiBiase (2003, p. 1) requires students in the course to “publish” assignments in e-portfolios because he believes that “the information technology skills and reflective attitudes they develop in the process are both valuable learning